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COMMUNIST SUBVERSION
OF
GUATEMALA

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TABLE OF CONTENTS

	Page
A. Introduction	1
B. The Beginning.	2
C. Tactical Developments.	3
D. The Open Party	6
E. Adjuncts to Power.	8
1. The Agrarian Reform.	8
2. Propaganda Media	9
3. Front Organizations.	11
F. Analysis of Communist Influence.	12

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COMMUNIST SUBVERSION OF GUATEMALA

A. Introduction

The steps by which Communism seeks to capture free nations may vary in accordance with local conditions, but the organizational and operational techniques used by Communist Parties everywhere bear a striking resemblance to each other. To those people who would belittle Communism's chances for success in areas of the world remote from the Soviet orbit, the story of Guatemala should emphasize the dangers inherent in any country where a carefully conceived and cleverly executed program is not effectively opposed by that majority of the people who are non-Communist.

It should not be forgotten that in all free countries of the world, the Communists seek to gain popular support not through pushing their own platform, but by espousing non-Communist ideas; by striving to make people believe that Communism stands for the abolition of things that are bad; by promising to abolish whatever may be worrying a nation. Nor should it be overlooked that Communist operational techniques are designed to effect the greatest degree of control over the most important of the elements necessary to achieve political control within a country. It is not necessary for the Communists to achieve strength in numbers; it is only necessary for them to be able to control and manipulate in such a way that their influence is assured and opposition is effectively neutralized. The story of Guatemala presents an excellent example of this pattern of Communist subversion.

Although small and ineffective Communist groups existed in Guatemala prior to 1944, it was actually the popular overthrow in 1944 of the Ubico-Ponce dictatorship that facilitated the spread of Communist influence within the country. The political, economic, and social upheavals and re-groupings which took place during and following this revolution afforded the Communists those opportunities for infiltration and organizing tactics which had heretofore been closed to them. They were quick to seize their opportunities. Their agility attests to the Communist ability and readiness to exploit situations of flux--such as those posed by a liberal reform movement--and to utilize the usually dispersed strength of non-Communist groups as a springboard for their own concentrated drive for power.

The present extent of Communist influence in Guatemala, however, did not burst forth full-blown after the revolution. It was achieved in the course of several years and as a result of a multiplicity of Communist tactics designed to subvert and to neutralize segments of Guatemalan national life so that the Communist Party could be rendered the major force within the country.

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Since the Communists had had virtually no status in Guatemala prior to the revolution, it became necessary for them to move into both the political and labor spheres as quickly as possible. Their techniques followed classic Communist tactics and afford interesting examples of the application of such tactics in a manner and with a timing calculated to solidify Communist influence, both openly as well as clandestinely, within the most important elements of Guatemalan national life.

Major developments in the pattern of this Communist subversion were usually heralded by visits either into Guatemala by foreign Communists or by Guatemalan Communists traveling into the Soviet orbit. While efforts will be made in this report to present developments in chronological order, Communist activities in various spheres naturally overlapped. Indeed, it is as a result of parallel developments that Communist influence in Guatemala has reached its present peak.

B. The Beginning

Because Communist moves to dominate the Guatemalan labor movement were comparatively immediate and direct, initial Communist successes in this field represent the most obvious first step in the pattern of Communist subversion. After the revolution, the emerging labor situation in Guatemala easily lent itself to Communist manipulation. Whereas before 1944 no labor unions had existed except for the controlled workingmen's mutual-aid societies, under the new freedoms brought by the revolution the country's first labor unions appeared and, by 1945, these fledgling unions were incorporated into the first national labor federation, the Confederacion de Trabajadores de Guatemala (CTG).

The most potent seeds of the future Communist Party were initially planted within the CTG. This new labor federation had a recognized need for experienced labor advisers to help in its establishment and progress; such advisers were not to be found in Guatemala. Into this breach quickly stepped a group of Central Americans with Communist backgrounds and with experience in organizing labor in other countries. They became the advisers to the young CTG and, through their efforts, the CTG began early to nourish a growing group of Communist-oriented young labor leaders. The most successful method of indoctrination utilized by these Communists was a CTG school whose ostensible purpose was to train labor leaders. Instead, this school was successfully used as a Communist indoctrination center until forced to close in 1946 because of opposition to its strong Communist orientation.

At the same time that Communist influence was spreading in the labor movement, a more subtle Communist infiltration had begun within Guatemalan political movements. The "students' party," Frente Popular Libertador (FPL), and the "teachers' party," Renovacion Nacional (RN),

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were revolutionary parties formed to support the presidential candidacy of Arevalo. These two parties fused in 1945 to form the Partido Accion Revolucionaria (PAR) and then later withdrew, leaving all three parties in existence. Communist and Communist-oriented figures managed to exert an influence in the indoctrination of these political parties at their inception.

Again, Communists from neighboring countries came into Guatemala to work with these political groups. Practically all of those affiliated today with the Guatemalan Communist Party were active in these three "revolutionary parties," for the growing number of young Guatemalan Communists were content for several years to work within the leftist Administration parties and did not emerge as a separate political entity until a more propitious time. As a result of both the doctrines taught by the CTG school and the efforts of Communist figures within the revolutionary parties, within 3 years after the 1944 revolution a group of young Guatemalans had crystallized into a permanent Communist organization operating clandestinely within the revolutionary political movement.

C. Tactical Developments

Meanwhile, Communist efforts to dominate the Guatemalan labor movement received a slight setback, but not one which seriously threatened the eventual Communist control. It is possible that this lesson of the labor movement was well learned by the Communists and contributed to their selection of more subtle techniques to be applied to political organizations.

The Communist orientation of the CTG school so alarmed the railway union and certain other unions that a factional fight split the CTG. In 1946, these anti-Communist unions withdrew and formed another national labor federation, the Federacion Sindical de Guatemala (FSG) and, at the same time, the CTG school was shut down by the government as a violation of the article in the constitution forbidding "political organizations of a foreign or international character." The FSG, however, came under leadership and pressure that gradually returned it to the Communist viewpoint. By 1950, the FSG had affiliated with the World Federation of Trade Unions (WFTU) and the Confederacion de Trabajadores de la America Latina (CTAL); in 1951, it was finally re-absorbed by the CTG. As an anti-Communist organization, the FSG was unable to produce the unity of purpose, the militant membership, or the political support achieved by the Communists in the CTG.

To some extent, however, the withdrawal of the anti-Communist unions from the CTG may have accelerated the complete domination by the Communists of the remaining CTG organization. Of the early member unions, that of the school teachers, the STEG, had shown itself particularly

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susceptible to Communist influence. For instance, this union had strongly supported the Communist-orientated CTG indoctrination school. With the withdrawal of those unions which formed the FSG, the STEG remained as the most militant union within the CTG and came to dominate it. It was largely from the ranks of the STEG that a group of young Communists emerged to dominate the entire CTG movement. The most outstanding of these, Victor Manuel Gutierrez, rose rapidly to become STEG Secretary General and later Secretary General of the CTG.

After the re-absorption of the FSG by the CTG, this sole labor federation of Guatemala became known as the Confederacion General de Trabajadores de Guatemala (CGTG). Gutierrez became Secretary General and the organization was under complete Communist domination. All key positions in the CGTG are held today by members of the Guatemalan Communist Party. Throughout the period when the CTG and later the CGTG were being brought under Communist control, Gutierrez and his group received extensive aid from Communists from outside the country; these represented a rather large influx of trained Communists who helped to advance the ideological and organizational capacities of the local group.

But Communist participation in Guatemalan politics continued for some time to be conducted behind the facade of other parties. Until 1950, the end of the Arevalo administration, the existence of any Communist political organization in Guatemala was denied. The "revolutionary parties" -- the FPL and the RN -- had formed the principal support which installed Arevalo as President in 1944. Gutierrez had been an early member of the FPL and, after the formation of the PAR, later became a member of that party. Jose Manuel Fortuny, who was to become the Secretary General of the Guatemalan Communist Party, was also a member of the PAR.

By 1949, there began a series of Communist moves which culminated in the eventual emergence of an open Communist Party, the most virile and flourishing of the four allied parties controlling the government of Guatemala. It is an interesting story of Communist tactics designed to ensure a favorable political climate, legitimate participation in government, and the effective neutralization of any remaining non-Communist groups not already broken up by Communist maneuvers.

In 1949, Gutierrez resigned from the PAR. In 1950, Fortuny and 10 others also resigned from the PAR and established a frankly Communist newspaper entitled Octubre, whose initial subheading was "For a Great Communist Party, Vanguard of the Workers, the Peasants, and the People." A month after the appearance of this paper, Gutierrez founded the Partido Revolucionario Obrero de Guatemala (PROG), a workers' party for Marxist-Leninist indoctrination of political and labor leaders. To work in the 1950 presidential and congressional elections, leaders of the Octubre Communists and of the PROG, together with the labor unions under their

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influence, formed a joint committee. This committee had several successful candidates for Congress, including Gutierrez who supported Arbenz' candidacy for the Presidency.

It was not until April 1951, however, that Fortuny signed a press statement as "Secretary General of the Partido Comunista de Guatemala" (PCG). Here, at last, was the first known avowal that an organized Communist Party existed in Guatemala. A few weeks later Fortuny admitted publicly that the Communist Party of Guatemala had existed as a secret organization since September 1947. In June 1951, on the first anniversary of Octubre, the party held a public rally, announcing that it would seek to be registered as a recognized party under the electoral laws. The principal political leaders of Guatemala attended this rally to hear Fortuny formally launch the PCG. This attested to the degree of influence already obtained by the Communists in Guatemala and emphasized that their political support in the 1950 elections of such candidates as Arbenz, the new President, was paying dividends.

Communist political twists were not quite over. In July 1951, Gutierrez, head of the PROG, admitted in a press interview that he was a Communist. He was also the head of the CGTG and had kept that organization, and the CTG before that, firmly in the WFTU camp. After returning from a WFTU Congress in Berlin, Gutierrez, in January 1952, announced the dissolution of the PROG and advised its members to follow him into Fortuny's PCG.

During 1952, the PCG became increasingly important within the Guatemalan political movement. Fortuny and other representatives of the PCG began to be reported in the press as sitting in on President Arbenz' political conferences with the representatives of the other Administration parties.

In December 1952, prompted in part by protests against the existence of a "Communist Party," the PCG used the occasion of its Second Party Congress to change its name. It became the Partido Guatemateco del Trabajo (PGT). At the same time, it decided to make Octubre a daily paper, adopted a set of statutes modeled on the standard organization of the Stalinist Communist Parties, and confirmed its intent to register the party in the Civil Registry. It also announced that it would join the PAR, the PRG (which replaced the old FPL through a series of interparty shifts), and the RN as a member of the Administration's "Democratic Electoral Front" in the January 1953 congressional elections. In December 1952, prior to the elections, the PGT was registered as a political party, despite some anti-Communist protests that it should be barred under the constitutional prohibition on "political organizations of a foreign or international character." The opposition was not strong enough and was too late. The day of legitimate political power for the Communists had arrived.

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D. The Open Party

As one of the four parties controlling the government of Guatemala, the PGT began to enjoy a uniquely favorable position. The three professedly non-Communist government parties -- PAR, PRG, and RN -- continued to be aggressive supporters of the nationalist and leftist goals of the revolutionary movement which began in 1944. The PGT, of course, claimed similar objectives and became the most insistent exponent of stronger unity within the National Democratic Front, urging not only political alliance among the government parties and labor groups but also an increased alliance to include mass organizations and all other manifestations of a "united front program." This is a classic Communist tactic. There was, and is, no obvious difference in principle between the three revolutionary parties and the PGT which would hamper the forging of a stronger government under PGT leadership.

Furthermore, as the PGT emerged as an open and major political organization, a succession of events brought the organized anti-Communist opposition in Guatemala to virtual extinction. As the PGT grew in strength and prestige, the non-Communist elements in the other revolutionary parties found themselves unable to consolidate their forces to block the PGT's path to preeminence. While the PRG, RN, and PAR have in turn been wracked by internal dissension and scandal, the PGT has suffered no such weakening, and the ideologies and programs of the other parties have tended to become replicas of its own. None of the important non-Communist political figures remained free or in the country following "revelations" of alleged plots against the Government in March 1953 and January 1954. The PGT took the lead in protesting alleged "intervention" and in demanding suppression not only of opposition political activities but of the independent press in Guatemala.

Communist allegations that "anti-Communism" is equivalent to Fascism has found acceptance among the other parties. The PGT has been successful in gaining adherents to the international Soviet line among influential leaders of the revolutionary organizations. In particular, the PGT has led the other parties in an increasingly strident propaganda campaign against foreign, especially U.S., "intervention" in Guatemalan affairs. The PGT has skillfully exploited national discontents and has offered itself, in typical Communist fashion, as the instrument to abolish the worries of the nation and to safeguard its "revolutionary reforms."

The extent of Communist influence in the leadership of the other political parties in power in Guatemala rests on a more tangible basis than merely a common program of nationalist and leftist objectives. It should not be forgotten that most Communists were initially members of the other parties. Communists are still there. When Gutierrez dissolved the PROG and took with him a number of PROG members into the Communist

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Party, 39 others who had received the same Communist indoctrination in the PROG returned to the PAR in response to a public invitation to do so.

There is considerable evidence that Communists within the other parties are carrying out a tactical maneuver to further the "national front" and "popular acceptance" of the mounting power of the PGT. Indeed, this evidence suggests that the separate political entities of the other parties are fast disappearing. When Fortuny was nominated as a congressional candidate by the Communist Party in October 1952, he was introduced with warm praise by the Secretary General of the RN. In November 1952, he was formally endorsed by the PAR as a joint candidate and, soon afterwards, the PRG also endorsed him.

Again and again, representatives of the other parties have supported, joined with, or defended not only the PGT as a party but also its candidates for elections. Perhaps the most striking example of this was the statement by the Secretary General of the PAR in October 1953 that "... The PAR is a transitory party like the other revolutionary parties, which are destined to disappear and become part of the great world Communist Party." And "... I support the PRG ... but I support above all the Communist Party." The extent of this political affection is further illustrated by the fact that the PRG elected Fortuny, head of the PGT, and Alvarado Monzon, the PGT Secretary of Organization, to the Presidium of the First Congress of the PRG, held in January 1954; they were the only members of the Presidium who were not PRG members.

During the period when the Communists were thus moving so successfully toward political domination, their control of Guatemalan labor was increasingly solidified. The CGTG came under the complete control of the Political Committee of the PGT, with all key positions in the CGTG held by PGT members. With the exception of a very few independent local unions, the CGTG came to represent all organized industrial, transportation, and commercial labor in Guatemala, and has obtained very considerable strength in agricultural workers' unions. This strength is estimated to be at least 100,000 members, a figure which compares significantly with the total of 225,000 votes cast in the last congressional elections and with the total of 415,000 votes cast in the 1950 presidential elections.

There has been no serious challenge to the Communist leadership of organized labor since Gutierrez and his group, aided by Communist advisers from outside, assumed control. In 1953, a short-lived revolt against Communist control of the railway workers' union was easily put down and its leader apparently forced out of the PRG. Also in 1953, a new, tiny labor federation was formed and challenged Gutierrez to justify his international Communist affiliations. Gutierrez did not bother to answer; in January 1954, the leaders of the little group were arrested by the police and reportedly expelled from Guatemala.

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Allied with the CGTG is an organization of small farmers and tenants called the Confederacion Nacional de Guatemala (CNCG), led by a former associate of Gutierrez in the STEG. The CNCG, also affiliated with the WFTU, has constantly proclaimed its solidarity with the CGTG--even to the extent of the Communist theory that rural workers should be guided by the urban proletariat.

The political nature of the Guatemalan labor organization is well established. Political-action committees have directed labor participation in elections, and the CGTG and CNCG joined the four Administration parties as formal components of the "National Democratic Front."

E. Adjuncts to Power

1. The Agrarian Reform

Within the framework of their power in the political and labor spheres, the Guatemalan Communists have pushed their influence through many other related activities. One of the most important of these is the agrarian reform movement, which the Communists have recognized to be one of the most powerful instruments available to a minority seeking state power. In Guatemala, the Communists have gone far in gathering the force of this reform into their own hands and, indeed, shrewdly participated in it at its inception. Fortune spent the greater part of 2 years studying the agrarian-reform programs of the Satellites and was a major author of the Guatemalan Agrarian Law.

Communists, both in and out of the Government, showed their interest in adoption of the Agrarian Reform Bill when the Administration sent it to the Congress in 1952. The Agrarian Law created, as instruments of the reform, the National Agrarian Department, the National Agrarian Council, Departmental Agrarian Commissions, and local Agrarian Committees. The law assigned three of the nine seats on the Council to the CGTG and the CNCG. These two labor groups were each given one of the five seats on the Departmental Commissions, and they share three of the five seats on the local agrarian committees. In 1953, the law was amended to provide that 60 percent of the local Agrarian Committees should be composed of representatives of the CGTG or CNCG, that one of the three members of the Departmental Agrarian Committee should represent the CGTG and another the CNCG, and that one of the nine members of the National Agrarian Council should represent the CGTG and two others the CNCG. Communist predominance in the local and departmental committees was thus guaranteed by the terms of the law.

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Furthermore, the Communists have heavily infiltrated the National Agrarian Department (DAN) where they hold key positions. The Chief of the Lands Section is an avowed Communist and assumes charge of the department in the absence of the Director. The Secretary General (Chief Clerk) is the wife of Fortuny. Four of the 20 Agrarian Inspectors are avowed Communists and another 8 are probably members of the PGT. In addition, another dozen DAN employees are known members of the PGT. The CGTG has been especially active among rural elements since the agrarian reform was enacted, and has created for itself a further key role by giving effective assistance to applicants for agrarian benefits.

Nor have the Communists missed any opportunities to impress upon the public their importance in agrarian reform. There have been prominent Communists who have participated in all public ceremonies concerned with the reform program. There has also been reported at least one case in which Communist leaders of the CGTG took advantage of the strength of that organization in a particular district to incite the peasants to numerous disorderly seizures of land which had not been duly applied for and apportioned under the terms of the Agrarian Reform Law. Communist-inspired agrarian unrest could undoubtedly lead to a significant peasant movement disposed to violent action--which would give the Communists even greater control over agrarian reform and, accordingly, over state power.

Communist support of the agrarian-reform program is a typical example of their drive for power by espousing non-Communist ideas. But, as Fortuny himself has written in discussing the program, "... The Communist Party is not now fighting for the step toward the power of the proletariat, but, aware of historic conditions and because of these conditions, it must support whatever steps will lead to the definite liquidation of feudalism and the giving of part of the land to the peasants, and it must champion the present aspirations of the great peasant masses and the workers of the country, which point to a rapid and less costly road toward bourgeois development in Guatemala. ... our goal is a society without exploitation, the Communist Socialist Society."

2. Propaganda Media

The Guatemalan Communists also recognized at an early date the important attribute to power which lies in the control of public information media. Even while the major efforts

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of the Communists were directed toward the firm entrenchment of trained Communists at the top of the national labor movement and the construction of a well-knit Communist Party firmly interlaced with the allied parties of the left, their propaganda campaigns were underway and were effectively furthered by fellow members of the then-secret Communist Party who had acquired important places in the field of mass communication. For example, the present Secretary of Propaganda of the PGT formerly held the posts of editor of an FPL newspaper, announcer on the government radio station, and editor in chief of the government's Diario de Centro America; later he became director of Octubre and helped to form the Communist Party. Another present leader of the PGT was employed in the President's Office of Press and Propaganda from 1949-1952. The present Secretary of Organization for the PGT had, before the public emergence of that party, served on the FPL newspaper, on the daily Diario de la Manana, and as special reporter for the government's paper. The PGT's Secretary of Education is yet another who worked in the President's Office of Publicity and Propaganda until 1950, when he publicly avowed his Communist affiliation. And as these and other Communist leaders turned from journalism to management of the Communist Party, they left others well qualified and well placed to carry on their work.

Today an avowed Communist is Director of the National Radio Station as well as Director General of National Broadcasting, with jurisdiction over all the radio stations of the country. A well-known Honduran Communist remains on the editorial staff of the government daily newspaper, which gives copious and favorable publicity to Communist-front activities and frequently reflects Communist-line viewpoints in its editorials. There are faithful propagandists for Communism remaining in the President's Office of Publicity and Propaganda. Other similar-minded men advance the Communist line in the daily newspapers Nuestro Diario and Diario del Pueblo, the latter actually being the PRG party organ. And there is also the mouthpiece of the PGT itself, Tribuna Popular.

The Communists in Guatemala have continued to be uniformly successful in gaining wide circulation of their propaganda in the pro-Communist press of the country, particularly under the "peace" tag. Their propaganda development has followed the familiar international Communist pattern, adapted to the geographic, economic, cultural, and political conditions of the country. While eulogy of the Soviet regime and policies has its part, the dominant tone is set by attacks on propaganda

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targets carefully selected to build up antagonism and hatred toward free world influence, to discredit the leaders of nations opposing Communism, and to undermine domestic anti-Communist leadership. All this is approached, of course, by the Communist technique of identifying Communism with nationalism.

3. Front Organizations

Coupled with this Communist influence in the public information media are the Communist-front organizations which serve as sounding boards to echo and re-echo the Communist line. More importantly, these mass organizations afford means of cadre recruitment, general indoctrination, and agitation, while providing organizational and other links with parent international Communist organizations.

The creation of mass organizations is an integral step in the familiar Communist pattern for penetration and seizure of power within a free country, and in Guatemala the Communists have followed the usual practice of creating politically orientated associations among the social and cultural groups into which society can most readily be divided. It has not mattered that Guatemala is a great distance from the rest of the Soviet world. The Guatemalan Communist Party has tried to identify itself with many of the aspirations and hopes of the Guatemalan people and has formed those institutions whereby it hopes to influence an increasing number of citizens toward a form of political awareness that leads them to identify themselves with the objectives of the Communist Party.

Apart from the labor organizations, the most powerful and important of these mass groups are: the National Peace Committee, the Alliance of Democratic Youth of Guatemala (AJDG), the Democratic University Front (FUD), the Guatemalan Women's Alliance (AFG), the Confederation of Post-Primary Students (CEP), and the Saker-Ti Group of Young Intellectuals and Writers. Guatemalan mass organizations virtually always contain a PGT member, under the discipline of the Party Political Committee, in a key position, usually as Secretary General or Secretary for Organization. Most of these organizations are affiliated with a recognized international Communist organization, paralleling the affiliation of the CGTG with the CTAL and WFTU.

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F. Analysis of Communist Influence

Although the growth of Communist influence in Guatemala dates from the revolution of 1944, its acceleration stems from the advent of the Arbenz administration, which came to power in 1951. It has been said that the key to the Communist success is the attitude of the administrations of Arevalo and, particularly, of Arbenz toward Communism. This is true insofar as the tolerance of and collaboration with the Communists has permitted their activities to flourish virtually unchecked. It is also true when one considers the fact that, politically speaking, the Guatemalan executive has had the power to wipe out the Communist movement and has refrained from doing so. But this is only part of the answer to the Communist success--their organizing abilities, their operational techniques, their clandestine training, and their concentration of purpose equipped them to make the most of their opportunities.

Today, as active supporters and collaborators with the Arbenz government, Communists and pro-Communists are continuing to increase their strength and prestige. They can be found in all departments of government. Four of the 56 deputies in the national legislature are Communists, and many other legislators are fellow travelers and crypto-Communists. At least one pro-Communist sits on the Supreme Court. The executive department, from the office of the President to various ministries and the National Agrarian Department, is honeycombed with Communists and their sympathizers. Although the Communists have yet to gain a Cabinet post, two pro-Communists have held the post of Foreign Minister and one pro-Communist is at present Minister of the Interior. Communists and confirmed fellow travelers hold key positions in the Social Security Institute, the National Agrarian Department, and the Ministry of Labor. The two top Communists, Fortuny and Gutierrez, have ready access to President Arbenz. Pro-Communists hold important diplomatic posts abroad and in the U. N. The Department of Press, Propaganda, and Tourism is heavily infiltrated by Communists and fellow travelers, and, as previously noted, so are the official press and radio.

Yet despite all this, and despite, too, the important positions which still-hidden Communists and pro-Communists hold within the non-Communist administration parties, the PGT is small and the Communist movement has no real mass support worthy of the name. Communists in Guatemala exercise a disproportionate influence in national life. The Communist subversion of Guatemala is a subversion by a minority. The country has a population of around 2,900,000. The PGT National Conference in August 1953 claimed a 100-percent rise in membership, but this would give it only about 2,000 official members. Even adding to this the probably substantial numbers of Communists who have not openly identified themselves with the Party, the fact remains that the PGT has obtained its position of influence without achieving a real rank-and-file following

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dedicated to Communism. Labor is but a cat's-paw and blindly follows the Communists, who mouth its own immediate aspirations and inflame its sensibilities; the peasants are following the same road. Within the other parties, the Communists have apparently concentrated on positions of leadership, without paying obvious attention to the lower echelons. There seems no reason to believe, however, that they will not continue to increase and solidify their influence.

The story of Guatemala also shows how international Communism is at work in areas of the world remote from the Soviet orbit. Local Communists in Guatemala have not achieved their power without continuous aid and support from Communist figures from outside Guatemala. Mention has already been made of the several foreign Communists who initially advised the young CTG; the principal foreign group consisted of Salvadoran exiles. During the years when the CTG and FSG were veering toward final merger, a further large influx of Communist visitors from abroad helped advance local capabilities. These visitors were Communists from Chile, Cuba, Brazil, Mexico, and Costa Rica, many of whom were leaders of their respective parties or important figures in the CTAL. In 1951, Louis Saillant, Secretary General of the WFTU, and Lombardo Toledano of the CTAL came to Guatemala and helped to achieve the unity of labor under Communist control.

During the early years of the revolutionary parties, their indoctrination was influenced by other foreign Communists from neighboring countries. A further upsurge of contacts with the international Communist movement occurred in 1952, when Fortuny and other PCG members were reported as participating in the Administration's political conferences. There were more foreign visitors to Guatemala, as well as trips by some PCG figures to Moscow and Peking. Even before this, however, there had begun a continuous flow of Guatemalan Communist leaders to the Soviet capital, including Fortuny, Gutierrez, Pellecer, etc.

There have continued to be frequent visits by Latin American Communist leaders to Guatemala which, today, has become a focal point of Communism for neighboring areas where there are conditions less favorable to the development of strong local Communist groups. And the PGT leadership is in contact with the main current of international Communism through participation in a variety of international conferences and congresses, sponsored by the WFTU, the World Peace Council, the World Federation of Democratic Youth, the International Union of Students, etc. Indeed, the story of Guatemala shows that it is not necessarily required that the Communists erect a full-fledged People's Democracy in the Western Hemisphere in order to advance toward their objective of destroying its united opposition to Soviet world domination.